

I leue al this thyng, quod Valerian,
For sother thyng than this, I dar wel say,
Under the hevene no wight thynke may.
¶ Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nyste where,
And Pope Urban hym cristened right there.

VALERIAN gooth boom and fynt Cecilie
Withinne his chambre with an angel
stonde;
This angel hadde of roses and of lillie
Corones two, the which he bar in honde;
And first to Cecilie, as I understonde,
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
That oother to Valerian, hir make.

¶ With body clene, and with unwemmed thought,
Kepeth ay wel thise corones, quod he;
fro Paradys to yow have I hem broght,
Ne nevere mo ne shal they roten bee,
Ne lese hir soote savour, trusteth me;
Ne nevere wight shal seen hem with his eye,
But he be chaast and hate vileynye.

And thou, Valerian, for thou so soone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy boone.
¶ I have a brother, quod Valerian tho,
That in this world I love no man so.
I pray yow that my brother may han grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place.

THE angel seyde, God liketh thy requeste,
And bothe, with the palm of martirdom,
Ye shullen come unto his blisful feste.
¶ And with that word Tiburce his brother coom.
And whan that he the savour undernood
Which that the roses and the lillies caste,
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste,

And seyde: I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,
Whennes that soote savour cometh so
Of rose and lillies that I smelle heer;
for though I hadde hem in myne handes two
The savour myghte in me no depper go.
The sweete smel that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde.

VALERIAN seyde, Two corones han we,
Snow white and rose-reed, that shynen
cleere,
Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght to see;
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
So shaltow seen hem, leue brother deere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouth,
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.

TIBURCE answerde: Seistow this to me
In soothnesse, or in dreem I herkne this?
¶ In dremes, quod Valerian, han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, ywis;
But now at erst in trouthe our dwellyng is.
¶ How woostow this, quod Tiburce, in what
wyse?
¶ Quod Valerian: That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe ytaught
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt reneye
The ydoles and be clene, and elles naught.
¶ And of the myracle of thise corones tweye,
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye;
Solempnely this noble doctour deere
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

The palm of martirdom for to receyve
Seinte Cecilie, fulfild of Goddes yifte,
The world and eek hire chambre gan she weyve;
Witnessse Tyburces and Valerians shifte,
To which God of his bountee wolde shifte
Corones two of floures wel smellynge,
And made his angel hem the corones brynge:

The mayde hath broght thise men to blisse above;
The world hath wist what it is worth, certeyn,
Devocioun of chastitee to love.
¶ Tho shewed hym Cecilie, al open and pleyn,
That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in reyn;
for they been dombe, and therto they been deye,
And charged hym his ydoles for to leve.

WHOSO that troweth nat this, a beest he is,
Quod tho Tiburce, if that I shal nat lye,
And she gan kisse his brest, that herde
this,
And was ful glad he koude trouthe espye.
¶ This day I take thee for myn allye,
Seyde this blisful faire mayde, deere;
And after that she seyde as ye may here:

Lo, right so as the love of Crist, quod she,
Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wise
Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,
Syn that thou wolt thine ydoles despise.
Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
And make thee clene; so that thou mowe biholde
The anges face of which thy brother tolde.

TIBURCE answerde and seyde, Brother deere,
first tel me whider I shal, and to what man?
¶ To whom? quod he, com forth with right
good cheere;
I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban.
¶ Til Urban? brother myn Valerian,
Quod tho Tiburce; woltow me thider lede?
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban, quod he tho,
That is so ofte dampned to be deed,
And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
And dar nat ones putte forth his heed?
Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed
If he were founde, or that men myghte hym spyce;
And we also, to bere hym compaignye;

And whil we seken thilke divinitee
That is yhid in hevene pryvely,
Algate ybrend in this world shul we be!
¶ To whom Cecilie answerde boldely,
Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully

This lyf to lese, myne owene deere brother,
If this were lyyngge oonly and noon oother.

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,
That nevere shal be lost, ne drede thee noght,
Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace;
That fadres son hath alle thyng ywroght,
That al that wroght is with a skilful thocht,
And al that fro the fader gan procede,
The Goost, that fro the fader gan procede,
Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle Goddes sone,
Whan he was in this world, declared heere
That ther was oother lyf ther men may wone.
¶ To whom answerde Tiburce, O suster deere,
Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
Ther nys but oo God, lord in soothfastnesse;
And now of three how maystow bere witnessse?

¶ That shal I telle, quod she, er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So in oo beyngge of divinitee
Thre persones may ther right wel bee.
¶ Tho gan she hym ful bisily to preche
Of Cristes come, and of his peynes teche.

And many pointes of his passiou;
How Goddes sone in this world was withholde,
To doon mankynde pleyn remissioun,
That was ybounde in synne and cares colde:
Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde.
And after this Tiburce, in good entente,
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente,

That thanked God; and with glad herte and light
He cristned hym, and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernynge, Goddes knyght.
And after this Tiburce gat swich grace,
That every day he saugh, in tyme and space,
The aungel of God; and every maner boone
That he God axed, it was sped ful soone.

Twere ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How manye wondres Jhesus for hem
wroghte;
But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn,
The sergeants of the toun of Rome hem soghte,
And hem bifrom Almache the Prefect broghte,
Which hem opposed, and knew al hire entente,
And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente,

And seyde: Whoso wol nat sacrificen,
Swap of his heed; this my sentence heer!
¶ Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
Don Maximus, that was an officer
Of the Prefectes, and his cornicular,
hem hente; and whan he forth the seintes ladde,
hymself he weep, for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes loore,
He gat hym of the tormentours leve,
And ladde hem to his hous withoute moore,
And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,

They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,
The false feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecilie cam, whan it was woxen nyght,
With preestes that hem cristned all yfeere;
And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
Cecilie hem seyde with a ful stedefast cheere,
Now, Cristes owene knyghtes leve and deere,
Cast alle away the werkis of derknesse,
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han, for sothe ydoon a greet bataille,
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye conserved,
Gooth to the corone of lyf that may nat faille;
The rightful Juge, which that ye han served,
Shal yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved.
¶ And whan this thing was seyde as I devyse,
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrificen.

But whan they weren to the place broght,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They nolde encense ne sacrificen right noght,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place;
hir soules wenten to the kyng of grace.

THIS Maximus, that saugh this thyng bityde,
With pitous teeris tolde it anon right,
That he hir soules saugh to hevene glyde
With aungels ful of cleernesse and of light,
And with his word converted many a wight;
for which Almachius dide hym so to bete,
With whippe of leed, til he the lif gan lete.

CECILIE hym took, and buried hym anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely,
Withinne hire buryng place, under the stoon.
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad his ministres fecchen openly
Cecilie, so that she myghte in his presence
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense.

But they, converted at hir wise loore,
Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and moore,
Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,
That hath so good a servant hym to serve;
This with oo voys we trowen, thogh we sterve!

ALMACHIAS, that herde of this doynge,
Bad fecchen Cecilie, that he myghte hire see;
And alderfirst, lo! this was his axynge:
What maner womman artow? tho quod he.
¶ I am a gentil womman born, quod she.
¶ I axe thee, quod he, though it thee greewe;
Of thy religioun and of thy bileve.

E han bigonne youre question folily,
Quod she, that wolden two answeres
conclude
In oo demande; ye axed lewedly.